

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 471

By Powell

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Griffin Barry for his assistance in the arrest of one of Tennessee's ten most wanted men.

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2017, Culleoka Unit School teacher Tad Cummins absconded with his fifteen-year-old former student Elizabeth Thomas, resulting in a nationwide manhunt that lasted nearly six weeks; and

WHEREAS, on April 18, 2017, Middle Tennessee native Griffin Barry, who was serving as caretaker for a small wood cabin in the rural Northern California hamlet of Cecilville, was approached by a stranger who said he was looking for work after losing everything he owned in a fire in Colorado; the man was accompanied by a teenage girl; and

WHEREAS, Griffin Barry agreed to employ the man by having him assist in lifting rocks from a nearby creek; a neighbor noticed the young girl waiting in a vehicle without license plates and made the connection with the Cummins/Thomas manhunt; and

WHEREAS, the neighbor informed the owner, and the owner then informed Griffin Barry of the identity of the two strangers; and

WHEREAS, Tad Cummins and Elizabeth Thomas had been living in the wood cabin for a week; Griffin Barry encouraged them to stay an additional night and alerted the Siskiyou County Sheriff; and

WHEREAS, after the sheriff's deputies staked out the perimeter of the property on April 20, 2017, Griffin Barry assisted in the capture and arrest of Tad Cummins by awakening him and Elizabeth Thomas and luring them from the cabin; and

WHEREAS, Cecilville is a small tight-knit rural community that polices itself due to the scarcity of and great distances covered by law enforcement, and so Griffin Barry was used to keeping his eye out for strangers and odd occurrences; and

WHEREAS, Griffin Barry served with courage and gallantry in a difficult situation and deserves proper recognition for his composure and quick thinking; and

WHEREAS, Griffin Barry played an important role in returning Elizabeth Thomas to her family and community, and he should be recognized; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Griffin Barry for his assistance in the arrest of one of Tennessee's ten most wanted men and offer our gratitude for a difficult job well done.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.